



Region 1  
490 N. Meridian Road  
Kalispell, MT 59901

**Decision Notice  
and  
Finding of No Significant Impact  
for  
PINE GROVE POND  
FISHING ACCESS SITE  
PROPOSED SOUTH ACQUISITION  
Environmental Assessment**

**October 20, 2014**

**Description of the Proposed Action:**

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) is proposing to purchase two parcels of land totaling 4.39 acres bordering the Pine Grove Pond Fishing Access Site and the Whitefish River. FWP is also proposing to accept the donation of .33 acres of land bordering the fishing access. The two parcels totaling 4.39 acres would be purchased for a total of \$42,700 and would provide additional public access to the Whitefish River and serve as a buffer between the fishing access site and the surrounding private land. Since its acquisition in 2010, Pine Grove Pond Fishing Access has been a very popular family recreation site. FWP currently owns approximately 18 acres there, including a 12-acre family fishing pond and 5.39 acres bordering the Whitefish River. The additional acreage would also provide public access to nearly 750 feet of additional shoreline and would establish the Whitefish River as a clear boundary between the FAS and neighboring private land. The land would remain in its primitive state with little development. The .33 acre donation would be on the northwest side of the fishing access and would be used as additional parking. The additional parking would relieve the pressure on the existing parking area, which is not adequate during busy periods.

**Public Comment:**

FWP accepted public comment on the draft environmental assessment (EA) for a 15-day period, from October 3 through October 17, 2014. The EA was advertised through media releases and legal notices in the Daily Inter Lake, Whitefish Pilot, and Helena Independent Record. The EA was available from the Kalispell FWP office and on the FWP web site, and available for viewing at the Montana State Library and the Flathead County Libraries. Ten comments were received, with nine in favor of the proposal and one expressing concerns about law enforcement issues related to the additional acreage.

**Response to Comments:**

FWP received nine comments in favor of the proposal. The reasons cited for supporting the proposal included its benefits to recreation and public access and its protection of fish and wildlife habitat. FWP received one comment suggesting that FWP did not adequately address the

additional workload that the addition would place on FWP game wardens and other law enforcement. The comment suggested that the area game warden would have to give up other duties in order to patrol this area. FWP does not anticipate that the additional acreage will cause an increase in demand for game wardens or other law enforcement. Pine Grove Pond FAS already covers 15 acres, and the addition of 4.72 acres should not significantly increase illegal activity. The vast majority of use at the site occurs at the family fishing pond, and that is not expected to change. FWP hopes that the establishment of the Whitefish River as a clear boundary will alleviate trespass issues on neighboring private land.

**Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI):**

Based on the analysis in the EA, I find Alternative B to be the preferred alternative. I have evaluated the EA and applicable laws, regulations, and policies and have determined that this action will not have a significant effect on the human environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement will not be prepared.

**Alternative B - Proposed Action:**

FWP would acquire a total of 4.72 acres in three parcels in order to provide public access to the Whitefish River for family fishing, wildlife viewing, and picnicking. Acquisition of the south parcels would also provide a buffer between the FAS and neighboring private land and would eliminate trespass on private land. Acquisition of the donated parcel adjacent to the access road and construction of a parking area would provide much needed additional parking and relieve vehicle congestion on the access road.

The final EA may be viewed at or obtained from Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, Region One, 490 N. Meridian Road, Kalispell, MT 59901. Contact person: FAS Coordinator Tony Powell, (406)751-5423, [tpowell@mt.gov](mailto:tpowell@mt.gov).

/s/ Brian Marotz

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Acting Regional Supervisor

October 20, 2014

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Date